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262 than tea and sugar. The strength of this woman's emotional dependence on meat is indicated by the fact that, in September 1945, she expressed the conviction that she would die if meat did not soon arrive in camp. She refused to eat bannock, beans, or potatoes. "What you're gonna live on?" Old Man asked. "I drink tea," she replied stolidly. Old Man and his sons-in-law, however, all complained that they felt poorly when forced to eat straight meat.[11]

Meat itself is ranked in order of preference. Highly preferred is moose, caribou, sheep, and porcupine meat. Fat is greatly relished and all meat is improved if it contains fat. From October, when the moose begins to run, and throughout the winter, bulls are tough and their meat contains little fat. They then are regarded as "no good eating," in comparison to the cow, which is rich and succulent with fat. During most of the fall and winter, rabbits are staple food, occasionally supplanted by chicken. Too long a diet of any meat [226] becomes displeasing and creates a desire for fish. Little or no fishing, however, is done in winter.

Certain meats are not eaten, including squirrel, wolverine, fisher, fox, weasel, and wolf. Some people also avoid eating marten and lynx. Rabbits are rejected if they are unusually thin, or if a "white stuff" is found in the lungs. Many people refuse beaver fat, claiming it is too strong and "works on the stomach like epsom salts." A moose killed by wolves is likewise not eaten.

In winter, staples, apart from meat, include beans, macaroni, white flour, sugar, dry whole milk, tea, coffee, rice, oatmeal, lard, baking powder, yeast, and dry fruit (mainly apples and raisins). Soon exhausted are such luxury items in the winter outfit as cocoa, bacon, butter, potatoes, cheese, canned sardines, dry salmon, cornflakes, sweet crackers, jam, dry eggs, onions, and sugar syrup or honey. Meat is generally eaten with rice, macaroni, beans, or, when available, potatoes. Bannock generally follows the main course. When possible this bread is spread with butter, jam, or cold bacon grease. Cooked dry fruit is also frequently eaten for desert, but most of this product is reserved for making wine. Oatmeal is prepared for breakfast, as are cornflakes, and hot cakes.

In summer fresh meat occupies a more limited place in the diet, being replaced by canned meat, bacon, dried salmon, and salmon bellies. The latter two fish foods are imported from Telegraph Creek, where they are said to be put up by Chinese merchants. In this season, fresh eggs are commonly eaten, canned milk supplants powdered milk, and canned fruit takes the place of dry fruit. A very few fresh vegetables are received from white gardeners in the fall or may be harvested from native gardens. Berries, oranges, apples, tomato juice, canned vegetables, and cheese have important places in the summer diet. Bannock continues to be made but the people also purchase pies, doughnuts, sweet and soda crackers, and pilot bread biscuits.

262 146 In general, particularly when meat is short, the winter diet is poor and nutritionally

[11] There is evidence for believing that if the organism is used to a mixed diet of proteins and carbohydrates and is then subjected to a straight meat or protein diet, a painful readjustment is required. Similarly a readjustment from a protein to a mixed diet also takes time and too sudden a switch is said to produce cramps and illness. White bushmen in the North have developed a system for making the transition from a straight meat to a mixed diet. Phillips, Unpublished Manuscript (1944).

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inadequate. A generously estimated intake of 1850 calories a day is insufficient for work which requires from 2500 to 3000 calories for both sexes. Vitamin C is almost completely lacking; the amount of vitamin D received in the diet is low and can hardly be supplemented by the weak winter sunlight. Such minerals as calcium, iron, and copper are also poorly represented. So long as a mixed diet can be maintained, a proper balance of carbohydrates and proteins is assured, but in winter, personal experience revealed the intake of fats to be too low. As a result, considerable sugar is craved and eaten. In summer the diet is more nutritional and the only deficiency seems to be in vitamin D, but this can then be supplemented by sunlight. It may also be pointed out that the early months of living in the bush are associated with a somewhat better balanced diet than the later months, when most of the luxury items have been exhausted.

Moose and caribou meat are the principal preserved foods. A few fish are sometimes dried in the fall but seldom last more than a few weeks. Berries may be preserved by boiling and storing in unsealed glass jars, but they do not last until winter. A few families were reported to mash up dried low bush cranberries with bear grease in the fall for winter consumption.

In summer and early fall, when fresh meat is in danger of rapid spoilage, it is preserved by drying. The meat is boned and cut into a single slice, about a half-inch thick and from eighteen to thirty inches long. These slices are hung over a pole, which is supported between two forked sticks, and exposed to the sun. Underneath the meat a small smudge fire is built to keep away the flies. The meat dries in a day or two and is then removed to the house or cache, where it may be hung or stored in empty flour sacks until eaten. A few rabbits are sometimes also dried in this way, the skin and viscera being removed and the animal hung up by the hind legs until dry. In later fall, when flies have disappeared, larger pieces of meat are hung outside the cabin without a fire and left to dry or freeze. If game is killed in winter, only sufficient meat for a few days is brought into camp, the rest of the animal being left in the bush on a platform cache. People return to such a "meat place" when more meat is needed. Food preservation is the work of women.

In order of frequency, meat is prepared by boiling, frying, and broiling. Staples, such as dry fruit, potatoes, rice, and oatmeal, as well as the fins and heads of trout, are always boiled. The water is not poured off these foods but eaten. In camps as well as in the winter settlements where there are stoves, meat and fish are both fried or boiled. Porcupine is generally roasted but is also boiled. When porcupine has been cleaned of hair and gutted, with the kidneys left in place, it is split lengthwise on either side of the backbone. The quarters are axed off and the backbone is cut into three sections. The meat is skinned after it has cooked or roasted. Moose tongue, rabbit and beaver meat are also usually boiled.[12] The heads of the moose, caribou, and porcupine are always roasted before an open fire and are regarded as delicacies. Moose bones are split and the marrow used in the preparation of soup. At a moose kill young people often throw the lower leg bones into a fire to cook the marrow, which is then scraped out of the split bone and eaten. When broiling meat, a portion of the kidney or colon fat is often simultaneously roasted and portions of meat and

[12] The same information has been reported for the Mackenzie River Indians. Phillips, Unpublished Manuscript (1944).

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we examine the demographic data and view the amount of illness in the society we encounter situations in which adaptation is unsuccessful. 182

An inescapable conclusion is that Kaska society stands in a precariously balanced condition so far as its comfort and survival are concerned. The population was reduced by at least one-third within the last hundred years. During the period of study, the death rate probably equalled the birth rate, although effective means of birth control are not employed. The Kaska are not a healthy people. All of these facts are indicative of the threat faced by the society in solving the problems of survival. The society itself, however, cannot be held entirely accountable for failure to meet this threat. In the last hundred years the people have encountered many novel problems for which they were not prepared with traditional solutions. Illness, for example, probably increased after the Dease River and Klondike gold rushes. In confronting illness at the close of the nineteenth century, the people lacked even shamanism with which to fortify themselves psychologically against the menace of disease.[19] It would seem that as far as the high death rate and extensive morbidity are concerned, Kaska society is suffering the effects of culture contact. White diseases have taken their toll of the native population not only because the people were less resistant to disease (although their resistance leaves something to be desired), but also because once these illnesses were introduced, the Indians did not receive the same medical protection which reduces mortality in the white society.[20] 182 177 [842] [755]

So far we have exonerated the society from failing to preserve the health and life of its members by pointing out that the strain of adaptation became considerably itensified following white contact. We will now consider some aspects of Indian motivation and behavior which, although ostensibly oriented toward survival, are actually contributing to discomfort and illness. The first of these is nutrition. At least during the winter, a majority of the society appears to suffer from inadequate caloric intake plus vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The consequences are seen in reduced energy and heightened susceptibility in disease. Malnutrition extends to children, in whom it may be seriously impairing physical and psychological development. The responsibility for undernourishment cannot be blamed upon a lack of education, since professional advice in food consumption, valuable as it may be, is after all limited to only a fraction of the world; nor can it be ascribed solely to acculturation. The causes for malnutrition appear to lie in the attitudes of the Kaska themselves as well as in conditions of acculturation. To dispose of the second point first, it seems likely that foreign penetration of the area within the last ten years (including the building of the Highway, airports, and the noise of aircraft) have resulted in a severe dislocation of game.[21] Such disturbances probably also followed influxes of gold seekers into the country and must be regarded as temporary. Currently, however, they appear responsible for the dearth of meat 182 146 182 146 177

[19] Honigmann, *Witch Fear in Post-Contact Kaska Society* (1947), 236.

[20] Marchand, *Tribal Epidemics in the Yukon* (1943), 1020. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 28.

[21] Williams points out that "the noise of road building, including roar of machinery and blasting, has obviously driven wild life back from the Highway. With the quieter conditions of post-construction days, wild animals will doubtless return. . . ." Williams, *Geological Investigations Along the Alaska Highway from Fort Nelson, British Columbia, to Watson Lake, Yukon* (1944), 3.

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182 (which appears to be particularly severe in the Upper Liard region, which lies east of the
146 Highway and along the air route), and for the consequent reduction of proteins and fat in
177 the native diet.

182 Malnutrition, however, is also a consequence of the fact that people going into the bush
146 in the fall are not in possession of sufficient purchased food for winter consumption. Grub
511 often becomes exhausted before it can be replenished and for weeks adults and children are then forced to live on a diet of bannock or fatless bread, beans, fatless rabbits, and a little fruit. To understand the reason for such shortages requires an examination of the attitudes and behaviors with which the Kaska Indians approach the business of living. The gist of these factors reveals that the people are not able to insure the realization of their own ideal of an adequate standard of living. Little effort is made, for example, to secure more meat in the fall than is immediately consumed; hence there is no surplus which can be preserved for winter consumption. Such preservation would make grub stretch further and is, in fact, an ideal of the people. This observation is not made without being aware that resources of game have been disturbed by technological developments in the Cassiar. Admittedly that disturbance makes hunting more difficult and less rewarding. The fact is, however, that men tend not to hunt until a supply of meat is exhausted. Ideas of futurity, therefore, have little influence in determining hunting behavior. Trapping is similarly relatively little motivated by ideas of futurity. The long delays likely to ensue between visits to the trap line (delays which are ideally condemned by the people themselves), and the haphazard methods of trapping all result in an accumulation of fur too small to permit the supply of an adequate winter diet the following year. Furthermore, there is no realistic evaluation of the amount of food that will be required for winter consumption. Partly because of straitened circumstances and also for psychological reasons, which will be discussed in connection with the ethos of the society, people underestimate their needs and commonly forget important items of grub. Such neglect may lead to borrowing in the same or neighboring settlement, with the result that other families are quickly reduced to shortage.

182 As we have pointed out, few men buy their winter outfits for cash. The proceeds of
511 the winter and spring fur sales quickly disappear to make up deficiencies occurring in the course of the winter bush life, to pay debts contracted the previous fall, and to live during the summer in Lower Post. People, therefore, live from hand-to-mouth, and if sickness enters the circle and disrupts winter trapping, severe disorganization must follow. Winter illness means the debt remains unpaid, additional credit is withheld or drastically reduced, and malnutrition with its evil consequences becomes intensified. A potential means of supplementing the winter's work by contracting labor to white men is neglected even by those men who do poorly in trapping and have most need for additional sources of income. The reasons for this reluctance to engage in wage work may be defined structurally (i.e., with reference to alternative or conflicting economic patterns) and psychologically. A structural explanation for the lack of interest in working for white men is to be found in the fact that another way of making a living, trapping, is readily available to the Indian. He can usually obtain a nominal amount of credit or otherwise secure (as, for example, by becoming an older man's helper) the minimal capital goods necessary for such independent production. Psychologically, as will be demonstrated in connection with Kaska ethos, the Indian prefers

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to be his own boss and for this reason trapping is more congenial to him than wage work. Furthermore the greater returns from trapping overshadow returns from contract labor.[22]

In large part, as we have indicated, the Indians have failed to solve novel or intensified problems which are concommitants of the penetration of the Kaska area by foreign agents. Partially, however, the failure to secure efficient adaptation is also an inevitable product of the Indian's system of motivation. No attempt can be made to assign any guilt for the conditions we have just described. The Kaska are no more to blame for their failure to provide themselves with adequate nutrition than the Canadian and American governments can be held responsible for disturbing the balance of game in the area. We have simply tried to define the efficiency of the Indian's system of maintaining health, life, and physical comfort in relation first, to the demands of the human organism and, second, to the resources of the external environment. We have done this with the assurance that the basic values of survival and comfort were shared by the Kaska themselves. Certain other implicit judgments, such as the need of self-exertion and planning in the pursuit of getting a living, are more immediately derived from the anthropologist's own society but are also ideally accepted by the Indians.

To sum up the conclusions drawn from the technical culture, we can say first, that the resources of the society—specifically, technological knowledge—are adequate for the task of adaptation to the traditional problems presented by the environment. Second, where problems have been introduced by culture contact, like the displacement of game and illness, the Indian posseses few aids for meeting their threats. Finally, the Indian has not learned to fit himself into the modern trapping economy and as a result suffers from malnutrition, which increases his susceptibility to disease.

[22] If we contrast Kaska society with our own, we find in the latter certain conditions supporting the system of wage labor which are completely unknown to the Indians. American society, for example, has made contract labor well nigh indispensable to survival. Without wages few people in our society possess the skills required to make a living. The loss of status resulting from joblessness is another factor maintaining the wage system in America. Unemployment, no matter how unavoidable it may be, results in placing the worker in an inferior social role with consequent loss of prestige. Finally, our society does not freely or easily provide opportunities for setting up independent production.